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C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 000400

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/29/2019
TAGS: [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [SMIG](#) [PGOV](#) [KCRM](#) [HA](#) [BF](#)
SUBJECT: BAHAMAS: POLICE COMMISSIONER FERGUSON RULES OUT
EXCHANGE WITH HAITIAN POLICE

REF: A. 09 NASSAU 64
[1](#)B. 09 NASSAU 360

Classified By: CDA TIMOTHY ZUNIGA-BROWN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

[1](#)1. (C) During a June 25 Embassy-hosted luncheon to discuss joint law enforcement efforts, Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) Commissioner Reginald Ferguson down-played previously mentioned prospects for law enforcement cooperation between The Bahamas and Haiti. Ferguson rejected the idea of stationing Haitian National Police (HNP) officers in The Bahamas to support investigations targeting Haitian smugglers, saying that while Haitian officers might be useful, particularly in Nassau, The Bahamas and Haiti did "not have that kind of relationship." He stated there were no plans to ask the Government of Haiti (GOH) to send HNP officers to The Bahamas nor to send a RBPF liaison to Haiti.

[1](#)2. (C) COMMENT: The concept of exchanging RBPF and HNP officers to improve communication and joint investigations has been raised with the GCOB before, but this is the first time we have heard such a definitive response. While several HNP officers have attended RBPF training courses in Nassau over the last two years, it is clear the RBPF's leadership retains deep misgivings about information sharing and cooperation with the HNP. This mistrust extends to The Bahamas' own Haitian community and is a primary reason for the dearth of Creole speakers in the RBPF's ranks. Such perceptions of Haitians and Haitian Bahamians, common in Bahamian society (REF B), continue to undermine the GCOB's efforts to address drug smuggling and illegal migration from Haiti. END COMMENT.

[1](#)3. (C) BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Reginald Ferguson, age 64, was named Commissioner of the RBPF in March 2009 after serving as the Acting Commissioner since November 2007 (REF A). He is a respected, no-nonsense official who puts a premium on integrity and often speaks out against corruption, accusations of which do not taint him but may stick to others under his command. He also has a good relationship and solid track record of professional cooperation with U.S. law enforcement agencies. Recently, Ferguson has come under fire from the opposition Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) for a series of police abuses and mistakes in two recent high profile murder cases. Although Ferguson himself has not been accused of misconduct, published allegations of witness intimidation and evidence tampering by the RBPF call into question his ability to discipline and modernize the police force. Ferguson's brother, Johnley Ferguson, is the Chairman of the ruling Free National Movement (FNM).
ZUNIGA-BROWN